



National Transportation Safety Board Factual Data Collection Report of Accident

ANC10CA040

Aircraft Reg No: N81191
Most Critical Injury: None

Location/Time

Nearest City/Place: Seward, AK
Occurrence Date: 05/15/2010
Occurrence Time: 1040 ADT

Flight Itinerary

Last Depart. Point: Same as Accident/Incident Location
Destination: Same as Accident/Incident Location

Aircraft Information

Type of Aircraft: Helicopter (not Homebuilt)
Make/Model: Robinson Helicopter / R44
Serial Number: 0855
Landing Gear: Skid
Engine Type: Reciprocating
Engine Make/Model: Lycoming / O-540-F1B5
Aircraft Damage: Substantial
Aircraft Fire: None

Operator Information

Registered Acft Owner: Castor Aviation LTD
Operator of Aircraft: Polux Aviation
Operator Address: WASILLA, AK
Reg. Flt. Conducted Under: Part 91: General Aviation

Weather

Condition of Light: Day
Wx Cond. at Site: Visual Conditions

First Pilot Information

Cert(s)/Rating(s): Flight Instructor; Commercial; Glider; Helicopter

Flight Time (Hours)

Instrument Ratings: None
Medical Cert: Class 2
Date of Last Med. Exam: 12/2009

Total All Aircraft: 967
Total Make/Model: 70

Injury Summary

	<u>Fatal</u>	<u>Serious</u>	<u>Minor/None</u>
Crew	0	0	1
Pass	0	0	1

Narrative

*** This investigation is based on information furnished by the Pilot/Operator. Additional details may be found in the Form 6120.1***

The commercial helicopter pilot reported that he was on a Title 14, CFR Part 91 business flight transporting one passenger and seven dogs to a remote camp. He said as he approached the camp, which was at 3,800 feet msl on a snow-covered glacier, flat light conditions made it difficult to discern topographical features on the glacier, so he elected to land at an alternate landing site at 3,200 feet msl to wait for conditions to improve. During the approach to the alternate site, just before touchdown, the pilot said the low rotor annunciator horn sounded, and he lowered the collective to regain rotor rpm. The pilot said he was unable to initiate a go-around, so he brought the helicopter to a hover, but due to the prevailing flat light he was unable to discern his height above the site, and he unintentionally allowed the helicopter's left skid to touchdown on the uneven, snow-covered terrain. He said that there was an "instantaneous dynamic rollover" as the helicopter rolled to the left, the main rotor blades struck the snow, and the helicopter came to rest inverted. The helicopter sustained substantial damage to the fuselage, tail boom and main rotor drive system. In his written statement to the NTSB, the pilot reported that there were no preaccident mechanical problems with the helicopter, and in the recommendations section of the NTSB 6120.1 form he wrote, in part: "Always keep an 'out' or rejected approach path if conditions are unfavorable on short final." He also noted that he underestimated the difficulties associated with flat light over snow-covered terrain.